

Podcast 53 - Coffee Drinking in Australia

by Rob McCormack - Friday, January 09, 2015

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Learn English while learning about daily life in Australia, with Rob McCormack

Podcast Number 53 – Coffee Drinking in Australia

<http://traffic.libsyn.com/slowenglish/podcast53.mp3>

Hi,

Drinking coffee in one of the many street cafes or restaurants in Melbourne is something Melbourne people love to do. I'm not really a dedicated coffee drinker myself, although I must admit that I do enjoy visiting a nearby café in order to have a coffee and chat with my friends. When I was young, about 50 years ago, tea was the most common drink. I can also remember first seeing instant coffee. Nescafe was the brand I remember, back in the late 1950s and in the 1960s. Nowadays, many people I know would not even consider drinking instant coffee. Tea is of course still one of the most important drinks which Australians like, but coffee is now the dominant hot drink in Australia. There are around 2.1 billion cups of coffee bought from cafes and restaurants every year in Australia. In this podcast I would like to tell you a little about Australia's love affair with coffee.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zro0mJ9V7ZQ>

Going out for a coffee is now part of daily life in Australia. This is definitely true in Melbourne. The type of coffee I'm talking about is made with a special machine which makes espresso coffee. Espresso coffee is made using finely ground coffee beans through which is passed a small amount of almost boiling water under pressure. One shot of espresso is 30 mls and is made from 7 grams of coffee. People who can operate these machines and make coffee based on espresso coffee are called baristas. There are even competitions to find the best baristas. The World Barista Championships are held every year in different cities around the world. In 2013 they were held in Melbourne. The winner was Pete Licata from the United States. Matthew Perger from Australia was second. It's great that being a barista is now a highly skilled and proud profession. Melbourne must be one of the best places to work as a barista, since people in Melbourne appreciate their coffee so much.

If you go into a typical Melbourne café, you will usually see around five types of coffee on the menu. They are Flat White, Cappuccino, Latte, Long Black and Macchiato. One of the most popular, and one that was invented in Australia in the 1980s, is the Flat White.



As I have found, it's normally no use asking for a Flat White in Europe or the United Kingdom, because they usually don't have it there. A Flat White comes in a ceramic cup and has a double shot of espresso, with the addition of steamed milk to make the full cup. Importantly, the top frothy part of the steamed milk is not included, giving the Flat White its creamy and velvety flavour. The top of the Flat White will often have artistic patterns which a skilled barista can create. The Flat White is the one I always order.

By contrast, the Cappuccino has one or two shots of espresso, followed by steamed milk and finished off with a thick layer of steamed milk foam.



The frothy top is sprinkled with chocolate dust. The cappuccino is also served in a ceramic cup.

The Latte is slightly different and is served in a small glass.



It's for this reason that I have never been able to appreciate the Latte, as the glass seems out of place for me when drinking a coffee. However, I know many people who just love a good Latte. It is almost the same as a Flat White, although it has quite a thick layer of foam on top.

The Long Black is two shots of espresso and hot water. This coffee is really for the lovers of strong coffee, as no milk is used and the flavour of the coffee is pure and strong. A Long Black is just too strong for my taste. Some customers ask for a Short Black, which is one shot of espresso in a much smaller cup.

The Macchiato is an espresso with a dash of milk foam.



This one is also for the lovers of pure, strong coffee. For me, like the Long Black, a Macc is just too strong for my taste. However I can understand how people can come to love it, given its strong coffee flavour with that dash of milk foam.

On a visit to the centre of Melbourne you will find cafes almost everywhere, all selling expertly made espresso based coffee. The same is true in the suburbs of Melbourne. I have a choice of probably 20 or more cafes all within 3 or 4 kilometres of my home. In the centre of Melbourne, you can even take a coffee tour, to learn about how our coffee is made and to taste some wonderful examples.

<https://www.redballoon.com.au/product/gourmet-gifts/tea-coffee/melbourne-city-coffee-walking-tour>

When you come to Melbourne, don't forget to have some of its famous coffee.

If you have a question or a comment to make, please leave it in the comments box at the bottom of this page. Or, you can send me an email at rob@slowenglish.info. I would love to hear from you. Tell me where you live, a little bit about yourself and what you think of my Slow English podcast. I will write back to you, in English of course. If you would like to take a short quiz to see if you have understood this podcast, you will also find it on my website. Goodbye until next time.

Rob

[WpProQuiz 39]

Vocabulary

appreciate = to like

artistic = to look like art such as paintings

café = a place where you can buy tea, coffee and snacks or light meals

ceramic = a hard material used to make cups, plates, etc

chat = to talk with another person

coffee beans = they come from the coffee tree and are used to make coffee

compared = when you decide which is better, bigger, smaller etc

competitions = when two or more people or teams show they are the best

consider = to think about something

create = to make

dash = a small amount

dedicated = when you really like something a lot.

dominant = the most popular, or the strongest

dust = very, very small pieces, so small you can hardly see them

expertly = when something is done by someone who is very good at it

finely ground = when something is crushed into very, very small pieces

flavour = how something tastes

foam = froth, something which has lots of bubbles (pockets of air)

frothy = when something has lots of bubbles (pockets of air)

I must admit = an expression used when you say how you really feel

instant = when something can be made very quickly

invented = when something is made for the first time

layer = when something is spread over something else. It can be thick or thin

love affair = to be in love with something or someone

Nowadays = today, currently

order = to ask for something in a restaurant or cafe

out of place = when something is not in the right place

pressure = when something is pushed very hard

profession = a job which requires special skills

proud = how you feel when you have something which is very good

a shot = one standard amount of something

sprinkled = to spread something out

steamed = when steam has passed through something to cook it or make it hot

suburbs = those parts of the city where people live. Usually away from the centre

tour = to visit a number of places

velvety flavour = when something tastes very good, very smooth